

Amendments in the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1 and 5 without prejudice or disclaimer. Please amend claims 2-4 and 6-7, and add new 8, as follows:

Claim 1. (Canceled)

Claim 2. (Currently amended) A minute droplet forming method according to claim [1] 3, wherein a size of said droplet to be formed is adjusted by controlling said setback force.

Claim 3. (Currently amended) A minute droplet forming method [according to claim 1,] of electrostatic attraction type for forming a minute droplet by attracting a liquid by applying a pulse voltage to a nozzle tip containing said liquid, said method comprising:

a step of applying said pulse voltage between a substrate arranged to face said nozzle tip with a predetermined space therebetween and said liquid within said nozzle so as to project said liquid from said nozzle tip and form a liquid column; and

a step of isolating said droplet by enhancing a fluid resistance within said nozzle so as to cause a setback force for returning said liquid into said nozzle to act on said formed liquid column,

wherein each of said forming and isolating of said droplet is carried out under a saturation vapor pressure of said liquid.

Claim 4. (Currently amended) A minute droplet forming method [according to claim 1,]
of electrostatic attraction type for forming a minute droplet by attracting a liquid by applying a
pulse voltage to a nozzle tip containing said liquid, said method comprising:

a step of applying said pulse voltage between a substrate arranged to face said nozzle tip
with a predetermined space therebetween and said liquid within said nozzle so as to project said
liquid from said nozzle tip and form a liquid column; and

a step of isolating said droplet by enhancing a fluid resistance within said nozzle so as to
cause a setback force for returning said liquid into said nozzle to act on said formed liquid
column,

wherein said nozzle is a core nozzle having a core arranged therewithin.

Claim 5. (Canceled)

Claim 6. (Currently amended) A minute droplet forming apparatus [according to claim
5,] comprising:

a nozzle for storing therewithin a liquid for forming a droplet;

a substrate, arranged so as to face a tip of said nozzle, for mounting said droplet dropped
from said nozzle tip;

a pulse power supply for applying a pulse voltage between said liquid within said nozzle
and said substrate;

a fluid regulating unit adapted to change a fluid resistance within said nozzle; and

a control unit for controlling said pulse power supply and said fluid regulating unit.

further comprising an environment maintaining unit for causing surroundings of said tip of said nozzle and said substrate to keep a saturation vapor pressure environment of said liquid within said nozzle.

Claim 7. (Currently amended) A minute droplet forming apparatus [according to claim 5,] comprising:

a nozzle for storing therewithin a liquid for forming a droplet;

a substrate, arranged so as to face a tip of said nozzle, for mounting said droplet dropped from said nozzle tip;

a pulse power supply for applying a pulse voltage between said liquid within said nozzle and said substrate;

a fluid regulating unit adapted to change a fluid resistance within said nozzle; and

a control unit for controlling said pulse power supply and said fluid regulating unit,

wherein said nozzle is a core nozzle having a core arranged within said nozzle.

Claim 8. (New) A minute droplet forming method according to claim 4, wherein a size of said droplet to be formed is adjusted by controlling said setback force.